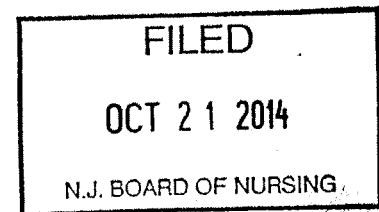


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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE	:	Administrative Action
LICENSE OF	:	
VERONICA KEENE, R.N.	:	
LICENSE #NR 13014900	:	
<i>NO 09779500</i>	:	CONSENT ORDER
TO PRACTICE AS A	:	
REGISTERED NURSE IN THE	:	
STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Nursing ("Board") upon receipt of information that on or about January 27, 2009, respondent may have failed to adequately monitor the condition of a 48 year-old male patient, S.L., who had attempted to commit suicide on January 26, 2009 by jumping into a swimming pool in frigid weather after having ingested

alcohol and prescription medications. After being brought in to Saint Barnabas Hospital, S.L. went into cardiac arrest at approximately 1:15 a.m. Respondent, at the time of the cardiac arrest, had not yet assumed responsibility for S.L.'s care.

After respondent began caring for S.L., at or shortly after 1:30 a.m., she noted a blood pressure of 65/36. The physician was notified and an IV fluid bolus was ordered, which was to be infused over fifteen (15) minutes to treat S.L.'s post-code hypotension. A liter of fluid was documented by respondent to have been infused at 3:30 a.m., forty-five minutes longer than the fifteen minutes that was ordered. At 3:00 a.m. a blood pressure reading of 67/37 was documented, with no other vital signs provided. At 3:15 a.m. a blood pressure reading of 78/40 was documented, with no other vital signs provided. The patient's mean arterial pressure (MAP) was 52, while an MAP of 65 is needed to perfuse organs. There was no documentation indicating that respondent evaluated the significance of the vital signs or communicated with the Emergency Department physician about S.L.'s low blood pressure readings persisting after the bolus was ordered, although excessive time elapsed during which there was decrease in organ perfusion due to the severe hypotension.

The Board finds that respondent's failure to recognize the gravity of the persistent hypotension, the effect of the failure to follow the physician's order and administer the fluid bolus more quickly so as to adequately address the decreased organ perfusion caused by the hypotension, the failure to adequately assess a patient in S.L.'s condition and communicate that condition to the physician and other team members, as well as respondent's failure to provide adequate nursing documentation (in terms of assessment and taking complete vital signs), constitute gross professional misconduct within the intendment of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(c). These failures contributed to the worsening of S.L.'s condition, which left him in a permanent semi-vegetative state.

The parties desiring to resolve this matter without further proceedings and without admissions, respondent waiving any right to a hearing, the Board finding that entry of the within order is appropriate, and for other good cause shown;

IT IS on this 21st day of October, 2014

HEREBY ORDERED AND AGREED that:

1. Respondent's nursing license is hereby suspended for a period of two years, which suspension is to be considered

stayed, and to be deemed imposed retroactively from February 1, 2009 through February 1, 2011. Consequently said suspension is to be deemed terminated as of January 31, 2011.

2. Respondent shall, within one year from the filing of this order, fully attend and successfully complete a course in physical assessment with a clinical component and a course in documentation, which courses shall be pre-approved by the Board.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF NURSING

By:

Patricia Murphy PhD APN
Patricia Ann Murphy, PhD, APN, C
Board President

I have read and understand
the within Order and agree
to be bound by its terms.

Veronica Keene R.N.
Veronica Keene, R.N.